



MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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NEW PLANNING DIRECTOR IS ANNOUNCED

Montgomery County, Virginia • County Administrator Craig Meadows has named Karen L. Drake, A.I.C.P., the county's new Planning Director effective in mid-March. She succeeds Steve Sandy, who departed in January to pursue mission work in Uganda.

"Karen will be able to hit the ground running as she is very familiar with planning issues in the County," Meadows said. "Her experience and knowledge of the County will be a good fit with existing staff. Her comprehensive planning and citizen interaction experience will help move us into the future."

Drake has served as the Comprehensive Planner for the Town of Blacksburg since 2005. In this capacity, she has been the town liaison to the New River Valley Planning District Commission Livability Initiative and Green Infrastructure plan. She has also been the staff liaison to the town's Historic/Design Review Board, and a representative to the town's Environmental Management Team and the Y Wind & Solar Project.

Drake has a Master of Arts in Applied Geography from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, N.C., and a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, N.C. She is currently pursuing a graduate certificate in Natural Resources from Virginia Tech.

From 2000 to 2005, she worked first as a Planner and then Senior Planner for James City County, Virginia. She also worked several years previously in private industry.

Drake is certified with the American Institute of Certified Planners of the American Planning Association. In 2011, she travelled to Tasmania as part of a Rotary International group study exchange.

Her volunteer experience includes serving as the Chair for the Montgomery Floyd Regional Library Board of Trustees and as a member of the Christiansburg Aquatic Center Advisory Committee.

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